

**AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS**

Claims 1 - 2. (canceled)

Claim 3. (currently amended) A fastening system for panels, the panels having retaining profiles arranged at the narrow sides of the panels, wherein mutually oppositely disposed retaining profiles match each other such that a first panel and a second panel can be fastened to each other, wherein at least one pair of the oppositely disposed retaining profiles has complementary hook elements which can be hooked one into the other and that the hook elements have hook projections connected to the first and second panels by legs with such hook projections having retaining surfaces by which the first and second panels are held against each other in an assembled condition so as to afford a gap-free floor surface, characterised in that the retaining surfaces of the hook projections are inclined, such that the hook projections are reduced from their free ends towards the legs and that the retaining surfaces of the hook projections bear against the retaining surfaces of the complementary hook projections, and A fastening system according to claim 1 characterised in that, in the assembled condition of the panel (3, 4, 5, 6, 22, 23, 40, 41) panels, the hook projection (5f, 29) at the underside of the first panel bears against the leg (4e, 26) at the top side of [[a]] the second panel (3, 4, 5, 6, 22, 23, 40, 41) and that a clearance (L1) is provided between the hook projection (4f, 28) at the top side of the second panel (3, 4, 5, 6, 22, 23, 40, 41) and the leg (5e, 27) at the underside of the first panel (3, 4, 5, 6, 22, 23, 40, 41).

Claims 4 - 7. (canceled)

Claim 8. (currently amended) A fastening system for panels, the panels having retaining profiles arranged at the narrow sides of the panels, wherein mutually oppositely disposed retaining profiles match each other such that a first panel and a second panel can be fastened to each other, wherein at least one pair of the oppositely disposed retaining profiles has complementary hook elements which can be hooked one into the other and that the hook elements have hook projections connected to the first and second panels by legs with such hook projections having retaining surfaces by which the first and second panels are held against each other in an assembled condition so as to afford a gap-free floor surface, characterised in that the retaining surfaces of the hook projections are inclined, such that the hook projections are reduced from their free ends towards the legs and that the retaining surfaces of the hook projections bear against the retaining surfaces of the complementary hook projections, and A fastening system according to claim 3 characterised in that the intermediate spaces provided with clearance in the assembled condition of two panels (3, 4, 5, 6, 22, 23) form adhesive pockets.

Claims 9 - 30. (canceled)

Claim 31. (currently amended) A fastening system for panels, the panels having retaining profiles arranged at the narrow sides of the panels, wherein mutually oppositely disposed retaining profiles match each other such that a first panel and a second panel can be fastened to each other, wherein at least one pair of the oppositely disposed retaining profiles has complementary hook elements which can be hooked one into the other and that the hook elements have hook projections connected to the first and second panels by legs, with such hook projections having retaining surfaces by which the first and second panels are held against each other in an assembled condition so as to afford a gap-free floor surface, characterised in that the retaining surfaces of the hook projections are inclined, such that the hook

projections are reduced from their free ends towards the legs and that the retaining surfaces of the hook projections bear against the retaining surfaces of the complementary hook projections, and, A fastening system according to claim 1 characterised in that, in the assembled condition of the panel (3, 4, 5, 6, 22, 23, 40, 41), the hook projection (4f, 28,) at the top side of the first panel bears against the leg (5e, 27) at the underside of [[a]] the second panel (3, 4, 5, 6, 22, 23, 40, 41) and that a clearance (L1) is provided between the hook projection (5f, 29) at the underside of the second panel (3, 4, 5, 6, 22, 23, 40, 41) and the leg (4e, 26) at the underside of the first panel (3, 4, 5, 6, 22, 23, 40, 41).

Claim 32. (canceled)